



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Australian grape and wine records aplenty - ABS

All the main grape growing and winemaking indicators reached new record levels in 1997-98, according to data released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The publication **Australian Wine and Grape Industry, 1998** reveals that :

- Grapegrowers harvested a record 1.1 million tonnes of grapes in 1998 from a record area of vines.
- Winemakers crushed a record 975,669 tonnes of grapes and in turn produced a record 695.2 million litres of beverage wine, which has led to a record 900.3 million litres of beverage wine stocks.
- Sales of Australian-produced wine reached a record domestically, with 338.8 million litres sold, and internationally with 192.4 million litres exported.
- Imports of wine cleared for home consumption also reached a record level of 25.6 million litres.

Season 1998 was another record year for Australia's grape growers, with 98,439 hectares of vines being cultivated, a 10% increase on the previous record in 1997. The total area of vines increased in every State, with South Australia recording the highest total increase of 5,370 hectares, followed by New South Wales with an increase of 1,897 hectares. Existing vineyards expect to plant a further 9,508 hectares before the 1999 harvest.

Winemaking in Australia is highly concentrated amongst a few producers. While 224 winemaking businesses crushed 50 or more tones of grapes in 1997-98, the largest 10 of these businesses crushed 68% of these grapes and produced 70% of beverage wine.

The record domestic sales of Australian wine in 1997-98 combined with the record imports of wine cleared for home consumption has raised the apparent per capita consumption of wine to 19.7 litres, the highest level so far in the 1990s although still short of the record level of 21.6 litres in 1985-86.

For the past 12 years, exports of wine have exceeded imports. The 1997-98 figures reinforce the position of trade surplus with record exports of 192.4 million litres of wine worth \$873.7 million. Table wine was the predominant type of wine exported with 183.0 million litres or 95% of the total quantity.

Details are in **Australian Wine and Grape Industry, 1998** (cat. no. 1329.0) available at ABS bookshops. Main features from the publication are available from this site.

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